



THE
Wanton Countess:
OR,
TEN THOUSAND POUNDS
for a PREGNANCY.
A New BALLAD
O P E R A.



(Price One Shilling.)



THE

Winton County:

THE THOUSAND TOWNS
FOR A FREEDOM

A NEW GALLAD

O P E R A.



THE
Wanton Countess:
OR,
TEN THOUSAND POUNDS
for a PREGNANCY.

A New BALLAD
O P E R A,
Founded on true *Secret History.*

When Men and Women cease Intrigues, the Sun will
stop its Course.



L O N D O N:

Printed for Mr. *Nichols*, and sold at the Pamphlet
Shop next Ludgate. 1733. (Price One Shilling.)

Warrant County:

IN THOUSAND POUNDS
for a PRISONARY

A NEW BALLAD



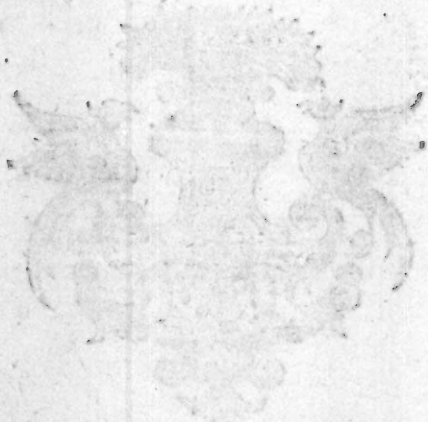
Printed on the Secret History

45

1. 16.

47

When men and women are in prison, they will
stop the Count.



LONDON

Printed by Mr. A. B. [illegible] and sold at the [illegible]
Shop near [illegible] 1733. (Price One Shilling)

T O

Sir TIMOTHY GAUDY, of
Gaudy-Hall, *Norfolk*,

Is this O P E R A of the

Wanton Countesses, &c.

Most Humbly Dedicated,

By his Faithful Humble Servant,

MORTIMER.

N. B. I should have wrote a Formal Dedication, Great Sir, but having receiv'd no Gratuity for the last Favour, though deliver'd neatly bound, gilt, and letter'd, I beg, for this once, to be excus'd.

[B]

INTRO.

T O

SW. TIMOTHY GAUDY,
Gandy-Hall, Norfolk.

Is this O P E R A of the

Winton Comets, &c.

Most Flamingo Delicacy

For the Flamingo Delicacy

MORTIMER.

Mr. J. I. should have been a Flamingo Delicacy.
Mr. G. I. should have been a Flamingo Delicacy.
For the Flamingo Delicacy, I should have been a Flamingo Delicacy.
For the Flamingo Delicacy, I should have been a Flamingo Delicacy.

INTRO.

END



INTRODUCTION.

AUTHOR and PLAYER, *in the Green-Room.*

AUTHOR.

NAY, rot me then, if I have stoll'n one Grain, Sir—'Tis all new, upon my Word and Honour—And then the Characters! are they not well adapted?—Why, who do you think I strike at in that of Lady Woodmore?—What do you think of [*whispers.*] But —

—Then let the *stricken* Deer go weep,
The Hart *ungall'd* go play.

And then I am so well acquainted with the Secret History of her Ladyship, that no Person under the Sun can be better qualify'd than my self to write on such a Subject.

Play. [*Offering the Opera.*] I have no Objection to either the Plot or Style of your Opera, Sir; they are both, in their way, as good as can be expected from any modern Author; but, since I have had the Inspection of the Dramatick Pieces that have been presented since the Death of my very good Friend and Brother, it has been always my peculiar Care to avoid Satire and Scandal upon any Score (otherwise we might give Affront to our best Patrons) and to

INTRODUCTION.

See that an Author, in every Respect, keeps up to the Original Institution of the Drama—I hate this Sing-long way of writing!

Auth. Institution of the Drama, Sir!—Why, Sir, my Opera Took Rise from Principles of Truth, and—

Play. The Truth is not to be spoken at all times, Sir—remember that.

Auth. Well, Sir, I find you are resolv'd not to encourage Wit and Learning!—I am highly affronted, and this Stage shall feel my Resentment. [*Takes the Opera.*]—Here is a Tragedy [*Takes a Book out of his Pocket*] which I wrote for this House; and you, Tom, I have made the Hero: But I am us'd so like a Scoundrel, that I'll ev'n throw it in among the Rabble at *Goodman's-Fields*, and let it be damn'd without a Name.

Play. Don't be so warm, Sir!—I have thought of something for your Advantage—What think you of the Theatre in the *Hay-market*? There are a Parcel of smart young Fellows who live by their Wits, and have Good-nature enough to oblige an Author in any thing he can desire.

Auth. But I hate that House, Sir; it has been so much abus'd by bad Writers, that a Man no less capable than my self, would find it a hard Task to make his Play run above Forty Nights.

Play. But you might soon improve it, Sir—

Auth.

INTRODUCTION.

Auth. Right, thou say'st well, *Tom*; and now, before all these Ladies in the Green-Room, I promise to make that House exceed this in less than a—ay, this Season, or the Beginning of next.—So, Sir, I am yours; and, if I succeed, you shall be my Inspector General, *Tom*; for

*Tho' Writers in Times past were not their Friends,
The present Time shall make 'em large Amends.*
[Exeunt.]



Dra.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Sir Timothy Woodmore.

Van Dunder.

Count Wriggle.

Antonio.

Robin.

W O M E N.

Lady Woodmore, uneasy for want of an Heir.

Clara.

Mrs. Skilful.

Pert.

S C E N E, Abroad.

T H E



THE
WANTON COUNTESS, &c.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Room in Mrs. Skilful's House.

Enter Lady Woodmore and Mrs. Skilful.

Lady Woodmore.



O Comfort ! no Relief!— is it not strange, Mrs. *Skilful*, that a Person of my Complection should be in this Condition ?

Skil. Did your Ladyship take the Prolific Bolus, and mundi-fying Electuary ?

L. Wood. Yes ; but all your Medicines have proved ineffectual !

Skil. Then Sir *Timothy's* Constitution must be very cold !

L. Wood. Cold ! he is all over cold—a mere Lump of Ice. If he did not breath and snore o' Nights,
B I might

I might swear he was dead; they are the only Signs of Life about him — Certainly no Woman has been so much deceiv'd in a Husband!

Skil. Your Ladyship must e'en use some other Method.

L. Wood. I care not what I do — I'll return to dear *England*, and spend the Summer at the *Bath*,

Skil. O! Madam, your Expectation will be baulk'd; Death hath swept away the charitable young Doctors from that Place, and the Ladies who sympathise with you, go now to *Tunbridge*, or to *Scarborough*, and yet find no Relief. Those Wells have been visited by Persons of every Rank, from a Dutches to a Citizen's Wife, but [*sighs*] without any other Satisfaction than cornuting their Husbands, and spending their Money.

L. Wood. I value not what Expences I am at, if I can accomplish my Design.

A I R I. Packington's Pound.

*A Man that will wed at the Age of Three-score,
Who has but the Use of his Hands, and no more,
Yet thinks that he always may pass Duty-free,
In Reason and Conscience cornuted should be;*

For why should a Wife,

Since Desire is rife,

*Be bred up in Ignorance all her whole Life?
That vile Imposition, for Better for Worse,
The Spawn is of Priest-craft, the Laity's Curse.*

Skil. Madam, will your Ladyship give me leave to recommend a —

L. Wood. Name him,

Skil. Count *Wriggle*,

L. Wood.

[I I]

L. Wood. O' my Conscience there is something pleasing in his Name I think, *Mrs. Skilful* — But can I confide in you?

Skil. Silence in Love-Affairs is a principal Branch of a Midwife's Business — She who reveals Secrets, must expect little Practice.

L. Wood. My Heart fails me!

Skil. Consider the Necessity, Madam, and let that inspire you with Courage.

L. Wood. I wish it were removed.

Skil. You are going the ready way to affect it — You know where the Count is just now, my Lady, and 'twill be a fine Opportunity [*the Countess walks, then turns about*] Nay, nay, don't retract; he is a Man of Parts, and has so much Good-nature, that he will not refuse you, tho' you were to sue in *Form' Pauper* — I will meet your Ladyship when you return, and in the mean time step to the Cloysters, and pray for Success.

[*Exit Lady Woodmore.*]

A I R II. O, how happy are we, &c.

*Can a Midwife do less
Than help in Distress,
(As bound by her Oath) ev'ry Woman?
Procreation's a Thing,
From a Beggar to a King,
There is nothing in Nature more common.*

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E II.

Count Wriggle at a Table, with a Book in his Hand.

Enter a Servant.

Rob. Sir, a Lady, who will not shew her Face, or tell her Name, says she must speak with you this Instant.

C. Wrig. A cast-off Mistress by her Assurance,
whose Company is as odious to me, as the Impertinence of a Dun to a Gentleman, who has
not Half a Crown in his Pocket ---- admit her.

A I R III. There was a pretty Maid, &c.

*How charming is a Virgin before she is enjoy'd,
With a Fa, la, la, &c.*

*But when our Hopes are crown'd, O then we soon are
With her Fa, la, la, &c. [cloy'd,*

*And, when grown stale,
She loses all her Charms,
No more she can prevail,*

*We cast her from our Arms;
For who can bear*

*A caterwauling Queen
To thunder in his Ear,
And all his Senses drain?*

By Pluto, a poor Whore is a miserable Animal.
[He reads.]

Hail, potent Deity! mysterious Gold,
Who can thy various Qualities unfold?

Here is a Question which would have puzzled all
the Oracles of Greece

A I R IV. I love thee, by Heaven, &c.

*When brimful of Love, mighty Jove had essay'd,
To gratify strong Inclination,*

*Tho' fruitless did prove all the Schemes he had laid,
They serv'd but to heighten his Passion.*

Metamor

*Metamorphos'd at last to a Shower of Gold;
Admittance he gain'd without Risk, O;
The Toy pleas'd the fair Royal Maid, and grown bold;
They acted the Lovers Al' Fretco.*

Enter Lady Woodmore.

O Energy uncontrollable! where Light enters,
Gold will find a Passage; nay, I am mistaken, it
it does not open a Way to the darkest Recesses.
[*Lady Woodmore advances.*]

L. Wood. Ah! the Count turn'd Poet! What
Planet rul'd at your Nativity? --- Have you chose
a lofty Topick?

C. Wrig. The most sublime in the Universe,
my Lady; 'tis Gold, all-powerful Gold: That,
which you and I love, and all Mankind most
eagerly pursues.

L. Wood. Truly, Count, you err in that Particular.

C. Wrig. How, Madam! are you not a Woman? and yet pretend to be Proof against Gold? 'Tis that, Madam, makes the Courtier cringe to you; the Physician attend you, and the Priest pray for you: 'Tis here, and nere alone, the World pays an unconditional Obedience, and, if you discredit my Assertion, I'll bring the whole Conclave of Cardinals to affirm it.

L. Wood. Believe me, Sir, I am an Exception to your General Rule; for I look upon Gold with as much Contempt, as others do with Joy possess it --- I have a plentiful Estate, a Husband too, but (*sighs*) no Heir to inherit ---

C. Wrig. Lady Woodmore, by Love! (*aside*) --- Madam, favour me with your Hand, and I'll tell you your Fortune.

L. Wood. Is the Poet turn'd Conjurser? --- I'll try your Skill.

C. Wrig.

C. Wrig. I have spent many Years in studying Palmestry; 'tis a noble Art, but discountenanc'd of late; for there are so many stroling Pretenders—

L. Wood. Who know as little of the matter as you do — Use no more Encomiums, least I suspect a Fallacy in this, as there are in others that have some Affinity to it. [*The Count looks on her Hand.*]

C. Wrig. Lady, your Line of Life is long — You have a large Table, and — good, very good — two Husbands — better yet — one Son, and two Daughters. — Let me see — the Boy will live; but, faith, Madam, you must provide Coffins for the Girls. Now, Lady (*looking up and smiling*) there is one Man, and only one, who can beget these Children.

L. Wood. Shall I not hear his Name?

C. Wrig. It begins with a W.

L. Wood. And mine?

C. Wrig. With the same.

L. Wood. [*She pulls off her Mask.*] In the Name of Venus, which way could you discover me?

C. Wrig. In the Name of Mercury, how could you pretend to conceal yourself? — There is a wonderful Virtue in Sympathy; besides, Madam, I have a Familiar, who performs Miracles.

L. Wood. Is your Familiar invifible?

C. Wrig. No, Madam; but if you desire to be better acquainted with him, I must request your Ladyship to walk into the next Room.

L. Wood. Bless me! I dare not; 'tis your Bed-chamber.

C. Wrig. Then farewell all Hopes of an Heir.

L. Wood. Does your Familiar understand Palmestry?

C. Wrig. He is an Adept, I do assure you, Madam.

L. Wood.

L. Wood. Must I then make an Experiment?

A I R V. O fy, what mean I foolish Maid.

Good Sir, what is't you mean to do?

Must I your Counsel now pursue?

Alas! how hard my Case!

Must I, dear Youth, by you be led?

By you seduc'd unto your Bed?

By you seduc'd unto your Bed?

Oh! I shall, I shall rue the Place,

Oh! I shall rue the Place.

C. Wrig. Robin.

Enter Robin.

[The Count whispers.]

[Exit Robin.]

A I R VI. Ye Beaux of Pleasure.

Your Scripples give over,

Be free with your Lover,

While I play the Rover,

And seize all your Land:

Without any Pother,

I'll make you a Mother,

As soon as an other,

Then lend me your Hand.

[Exeunt.]

Re-enter Robin.

Rob. If pimping be the Road to Preferment, I shall certainly be a Great Man before I die. But why should I doubt it, since I have known several

ral jump into Employments, who had no other Qualification to recommend them. [*One knocks without, Robin goes to the Chamber-Door.*] Sir, Sir.

Dund. without. What, refuse me Entrance? I will come in, Sirrah!

Enter Van Dunder, pushing Robin before him.

Rob. Pray, Sir, consider ----

Dund. Sirrah, I will not consider, therefore no more Words --- Where is the Count?

Rob. To tell you the Truth, Sir, he has prostrated himself within, and gave me positive Orders not to disturb him.

Dund. Prostrated himself! --- Very well, I understand you. Sirrah, you are a Dog in a Doublet, and your Master is now paying his Adoration at the Altar of Love; but I shall spoil his Sport.

Rob. I assure you, Sir, my Master is in a very devout Posture, therefore let me entreat you not to interrupt him.

Dund. Truly, Sir, I shall not regard your Entreaties, for I am determined to interrupt him, --- Oonds, Sirrah, a devout Count is as great a Rarity, as a religious Physician, or a charitable Priest.

Enter Count Wriggle and Lady Woodmore.

L. Wood. Nothing but Ill-luck attends me ---- Ha! my Uncle here ---- Count, as you are a Man of Honour, conceal my Name and Person.

C. Wrig. This Way, Madam, leads to the Back Stairs --- [*Exit L. Woodmore and Robin,*] *Myn Hcer Van Dunder,* a good Day to you.

Dund. I am pleas'd to find that you are not totally obfessed in Biggoty --- At whose Shrine have you been sacrificing this Morning?

C. Wrig.

C. Wrig. You are merry, *Myn Heer*, and it gives me unspeakable Satisfaction, that I can any way contribute to your Diverſion — However I would take it as a Favour if you would explain your ſelf.

Dun. It is no matter, Count, you muſt breakfaſt with me; for this Morning my Niece *Clara* goes into a Nunnery, dedicated to St. *Bridget*.

C. Wrig. How juſt is Heaven! — but ſure this Judgment's too ſevere for an intended Treaſpaſs. [*Aside.*] — A Nunnery, Sir!

Dun. Yes, Sir, a Nunnery — my Words are plain, and need not to be repeated.

C. Wrig. Muſt that dear beauteous Virgin be made the Property of ſome brawny Jeſuit?

A I R VII. Pinks and Lillies.

*We know that Priests and Friars,
Whatever they pretend,
Are but religious Liars,
And cant to gain their End.*

*How wretched is a Maiden,
When ſhe becomes a Nun?
She'll ſoon be over-laiden,
For ever be undone.*

O Sir, I have too long conceal'd what I now wiſh had been diſclos'd before — I love the virtuous *Clara*, in private I have courted her, nor did ſhe give me Cauſe to think ſhe diſapprov'd my Suit.

Dund. *pauses.* Look you, Count, I have always profeſs'd a Friendſhip for you; believe me to be a Perſon in whom you may confide, and to convince you of my Sincerity, you ſhall have an Opportunity

portunity of conversing with my Niece— if you can obtain her Consent, I will pay you Ten Thousand Pounds in *English* Money, the Day you make her your Bride.

C. Wrig. Thou art doubly kind.

A I R VIII. Of a noble Race was *Shinkin*.

Thou God of Love befriend me ;

My languid Mind now cherish ;

Do thou reclaim the beauteous Dame,

Or in Despair I perish.

Come, Sir, let us hasten to the Fair — Time is on the Wing, and every Moment is an Age to me. [Exeunt.]

End of the FIRST ACT.



ACT



ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, a Cloyster.

*Enter Lady Woodmore in a Passion, follow'd by
Mrs. Skilful.*

Skil. **L**UD! Madam, what is the matter?
L. Wood. Certainly no Woman ever
met with such a Disappointment. —
Oh! it is not to be borne — no, not to be
borne — Shall I tell you, Mrs. Skilful? — I was
within half a Minute of being made the happiest
Woman in the World — Hark you — [*She whispers*]
it was even so, when the unseasonable Approach
of my Uncle, embitter'd all my Joy.

Skil. May the Desire of a Maid of Seventeen,
and the Impotence of a Man of Seventy-Seven be
his Portion.

L. Wood. In less than half an Hour I am to
meet my dear Count again.

A I R IX. Give Ear to my frolicksome Ditty.

*I value not all India's Treasure,
No Riches I want, or desire ;
Stol'n Joys, methinks, give double Pleasure,
Stol'n Joys shall now crown my Desire.*

SCENE, *A Room in a Monastery.*

Enter Antonio.

Anton. To be Father Confessor to a Nunnery requires an *Herculean* Constitution. [*Enter Robin, and listens.*] If the Sins of the Flesh were not venial, Heaven knows what would become of Nuns and Friars!

Rob. This goes well — Fortune has anticipated my Desire, and if I improve not the Advantage, may I be call'd an insignificant Tool. [*Exit.*]

Anton. Excess is always prejudicial, and emaciates the Body, but a moderate Use of Things is most conducive to make us look hale and sanguine—I can confirm my Assertion with an *Experientia Docet.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Father, the *Heer Van Dunder*, Burgomaster of *Brussels*, desires your Company.

Anton. I come — [*Exit Servant.*] *Clara* is his Niece; but though she is now under his Care, I shall soon have her under me—A delicious young Girl!

A I R X. Take a young Virgin of fifteen Years.

*We claim Tythe of most Things now under the Sun,
Tythe-Pigs, and Tythe-Pullets, why not the Tythe-Nun?*

*We ease her, and please her, caress her, and press her,
And make her a Mother, as sure as a Gun:*

*With Preaching and Teaching her Senses beguile,
With Toying, not cloying, her Body desire,*

With Sport,

Us'd at Court,

And Pleasure

At Leisure,

Her Fancy we tickle, and make her to smile. [*Ex.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, A Room.

Enter Clara and Count Wriggle.

Cl. Count, desist, my Resolution's fixt, and nothing shall dissuade me from it.

C. Wrig. Consider, *Clara*, O consider, e're it is too late.

Cl. I have consider'd, pondered well on what I am to do, and from my Uncle's House shall go with Pleasure.

C. Wrig. O *Clara*!

Cl. This for thy Comfort, Count; a wealthy Maid shall soon and unexpectedly reward your Love.

C. Wrig. O never, never — If from this Day when you your self immure, I think, or look on Woman as a Lover, may Heaven —

Cl. Hold, use no Imprecations — such unguarded Expressions are ungrateful to my Ear, who am going —

C. Wrig. To a Nunnery, a Prison, from whence there is no Egress — there cloyster'd up you must remain, and not but Death can set you free — Reflect, my *Clara*, on your rash Resolves; for Nature ne'er design'd that thy soft Skin, thy tender Limbs should undergo the Penance of Whips and Locks, of Bolts and Iron-bars — To rise at Midnight in the hoary Winter — to be denied all innocent Diversion — to sit long frosty Hours, till the cold Cramp has seiz'd on every Joint — to fast and weep, till your pale Countenance displays the Rigor of the Priest, are Lessons hard, too hard for you to learn. Yet these, and more than these you do, if you persist in your Design.

Cl. O my Conscience I believe him — Well, sure he is the first Lover that ever talk'd with Reason.

Reason. [*Aside.*] — Though I must own my Burden will be heavy, yet Custom will make it lighter.

C. Wrig. Be not too credulous, your Constitution's weak, and cannot undergo such great Fatigues; their Weight will bear you down, and you must sink beneath it.

Cla. Sure I shall find less Oppression in one house, than when expos'd to the open World; and Virtue, when secur'd by Walls, in Safety rests, and fears no deadly Foes.

C. Wrig. True Virtue wants no Ramparts of Defence; she'll bravely stare Temptation in the Face, and keep her Ground in Spite of Opposition; but, when confin'd, looks like a gilded Counter, and gives the World just Cause to think she will not bear the Touch-stone.

A I R XI. Moggy Lawder.

*A Nunnery is but a Snare,
To catch Priest-ridden Widgeon;
A Trap laid to trepan the Fair,
And baited with Religion:
Lost Liberty they soon deplore,
And in Confinement languish;
With Tears they view the fatal Door,
And pine away in Anguish.*

Enter Pert.

Pert. Madam, your Uncle has ordered me to let you know that Father Antonio waits to perform the Last Office.

Cla. I will attend him.

C. Wrig.

C. Wrig. If I could entertain an evil Thought of *Clara*, I'd tell this goatish Friar that what he calls the Last Office, is but a Prelude to what I blush to name.

Pert. 'Twill be a Prelude to something which I should not blush to name; I know, but you little imagine what it is.

C. Wrig. I imagine what is too true.

Pert. You do not.

C. Wrig. I do.

Pert. I say, no.

C. Wrig. I say, yes.

Pert. And I say, no, no, no — Let Time make the Discovery.

Clara. What is the matter?

Pert. The Gentleman and I were arguing about a Critical Point, and I was resolved to maintain the Woman's Privilege, in having the Last Word.

Dund. without. Niece, Niece.

Clara. My Uncle calls — Farewell, Sir, and be assured you ne'er shall want my Prayers, and my best Wishes. [*Going.*]

C. Wrig. Eternally farewell. [*Sighs.*]

Clara returns.

Clara. You must promise to grant me one thing.

C. Wrig. Name it.

Clara. That you will be present when I resign my self.

C. Wrig. Madam, you shall be obey'd, though your Request does, like a poison'd Arrow, carry Death with it.

Clara. All Happiness attend you.

[*Exit.*]

[*The Count stands in a melancholy Posture.*]

A I R

A I R XII. Happy Groves.

*Oh ! how fruitless is my Love !
 All my Hopes abortive prove ;
 Oh ! the charming, charming Fair,
 Has plunged me in Despair.
 Soft Caresses,
 Chast Embraces,
 Are for ever gone ;
 Now forsaken by the Nymph,
 My Fate I must bemoan.*

[Pert leers upon the Count.]

Pert. Poor half-broken-hearted Gentleman !
 How dejected he looks !—Well, Men may boast
 their Wisdom and superior Reason ; but, o'my
 Soul, the wisest of them are Womens Fools —
 If we knew the true Value of Liberty, we would
 not surrender it to that imperious Creature, Man.

A I R XIII. When Sawney first did woe me.

*When Lovers first draw near us,
 They come with Hat in Hand ;
 But soon as they ensnare us,
 Like Tyrants they command.*

*Then let us use our Power,
 Whilst Freedom we can boast,
 For in one fatal Hour
 It is for ever lost.*

Is the Lady gone, Sir ?

C. Wrig.

C. Wrig. For ever gone from me.

Pert. Now if I had an Inclination to be good humour'd, I could soon rive your languid Spirits.

C. Wrig. There is no room for Comfort; no, not for so small a Portion as Hope.

Pert. By my Maiden-head I am serious.

C. Wrig. That Toy, I doubt, has been shipwreck'd, like many a Court-Lady's Honour.

Pert. Now, by *Venus*, I am a Virgin; but don't design to continue long in that Station.

C. Wrig. Let me advise you by all means to use the Remnant of Time that is allotted you; otherwise your Virginity may accompany you to lead Apes —

Pert. Say you so, good Mr. Fortune-teller.

C. Wrig. Fortune-teller! ha! [*pauses.*] — Has my Intrigue with Lady Woodmore been discovered? [*aside.*] — Hark you, Pert, answer one Question; answer it with Sincerity, and —

Pert. I must not, dare not, will not — Unhand me, Sir; I'll swear you are a very rude —

C. Wrig. So, all's lost — Here, like some shipwreck'd Marriner, I stand, whose floating Plank has left him on a Rock; beneath his Feet he sees the gaping Waves ready to devour him, and if he upwards cast his Eyes, the dreadful Precipice strikes his Soul with Horror. At last, with feeble Limbs, scarce able to support his Body, he strives to climb, endeavouring to preserve a Life, scarce worth the Trouble.

[*He walks, then stands and pauses.*]

Enter Robin in haste.

Rob. Sir, Sir — by *Saturn*, my Master looks as full as if he had married a young buxom Widow in

Expectation of a large Fortune, and she prov'd at last to be a *Cornish* Bite, pennyless, and in Debt. [*Aside.*]

A I R XIV. The Abbot of *Canterbury*.

*If this be the Fruit of the Thing we call Love,
Heaven grant that I never may amorous prove!
But shun, like Infection, this Womanish Passion,
Which now is, like Honesty, quite out of Fashion.
Derry down, &c.*

Sir, good News, very good News, Sir.

C. Wrig. Not for me.

Rob. Why, Sir, are you not my Master?

C. Wrig. This is not a Time for trifling.

Rob. I don't know, Sir, what you may call trifling; but I come to relate something to you of great Moment.

C. Wrig. Proceed.

Rob. You must acknowledge, Sir, that I have been active and diligent in your Service; now Sir, having laid before me the Example of a sage Politician, I began to tamper with the She-favorite, who, poor Soul! readily approved my Scheme, being very sensible it no way thwarted her good Lady's Inclination. As I am to act the principal part, methinks when I appear with my white Staff in my Hand, I shall look as great as a Lord-Treasurer; I always thought I should be a rising Man.

C. Wrig. To the Purpose.

Rob. To the Purpose, Sir? — if you will take care to play your Part to the Purpose, I believe you will have no Cause to repent — Not to keep you any longer in Suspence, I must tell you, Sir, that Mrs. Clara goes this Night into Bed, and you after

after her — she lies in your Arms, or you in hers — take your Choice, Sir.

C. Wrig. Now, Sir, I must tell you that this is impossible; for *Clara* is preparing to make her Confession, which done, she instantly retires from the World, and goes into a Nunnery.

Rob. Into Wedlock you mean — Sir, did I ever deceive you — to let you see that I am not a shallow-pated Fellow, I will draw in the Priest to favour our Design, or, at least, he shall not marr it; and the Devil is in the Dice if we can fail, when the Clergy are on our Side — But, Sir, I must desire your Purse and your Absence, having a very urgent Occasion for both.

C. Wrig. Your Request shall be granted.

[Gives his Purse, and Exeunt.]

Re-enter Robin, with Lady Woodmore.

L. Wood. Be quick, be diligent, and I'll reward you doubly.

[Gives him Money, Exit Rob.]

How impatient is Desire! O *Venus*, by *Mars*, I do conjure you to assist me now, and prosper my Undertaking.

[Exit.]

Enter Sir Timothy and Robin.

Rob. Truly, Sir *Timothy*, you have a large Account to make with your Lady, and Debts of that Nature must be paid.

Sir Tim. I tell you, Sir, I am so much a Man of Quality, that I will not pay Debts of any Nature, except they have been honourably contracted; I mean at Cards or Dice — Where is *Pert*?

Rob. You will find her on the Couch in the Drawing-room; there she lies, like a Hare in her Form, approach and cast your self upon her.

Sir Tim. Here Robin.

[Gives him Money.]

A I R XV. Come sweet Lafs, &c.

O Sweet Blifs!

My Mouth does water to be at her,

O Sweet Blifs!

Now for a melting Kifs.

To the Fair

With Caution I'll draw near,

And when I meet my dearest Dear,

Proscribe all her Fear.

She is young and tender, yet I could wish somebody had had the first Slice. [Exit.

Rob. Methinks, I am not unlike some of our English Lawyers, who will take a Fee from Plaintiff and Defendant—Did the old Man imagine that I would suffer him to raise a Flame in my little Pert, which he cannot quench—I doubt not his having an Inclination to the Kernel, but to crack the Shell is a Task too difficult for him. He now has one more suitable to his Years.

A I R XVI. The Disappointment.

'Tis no hard matter to guess what

The Knight and Lady would be at;

For more than one Thing she does prepare,

Hoping hereafter she may have an Heir;

Means and Ways,

Fancy to please,

The Knight expects little Pert to discover:

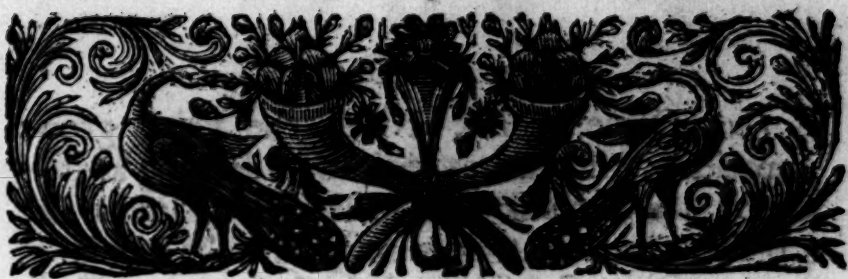
But, tho' elate,

Yet cursed Fate,

Will quickly betray the impotent Lover.

[Exit.

A C T



ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

Enter Clara richly dress'd, Pert pinning her Gown.

Pert. SO — I am thinking, Madam, if some unhappy Accident should prevent the Count from coming in time —

Cl. It would retard, but not spoil my Design. If he be punctual in the Performance of his Promise, I will generously grant him an *Habeas Corpus*, and he shall carry me away at once; but if he protracts the Time, I will pray an Injunction to hinder Proceedings.

Pert. As I hope to be happy, Madam, you talk Law as if you had serv'd five Years under an Attorney —

Cl. But let us not go too far, lest we imitate the Gentlemen of the long Robe, and degenerate into Nonsense.

Pert. If we should be guilty, I hope our first Fault will be excus'd, since the Lawyers daily commit infinite Errors of that kind without a Reprimand.

Enter

Enter Van Dunder.

Dun. Come, come, Niece, the Priest grows impatient ; thou art as tedious in dressing as if—
Odsó ! *Pert*, I think your Mistress looks more like a Bride, than one that is design'd to be a Nun.

Pert. O my Conscience I think so too — Well, that Face was ne'er intended for a Nunnery ; and those Hands were made for a Work more agreeable to Flesh and Blood, than to stitch Night-caps for some fornicating Cardinal.

A I R XVII. Charming is your Shape, &c.

*Who can see the charming Fair,
Who behold her Mein and Air,
And not fall a Sacrifice
To such lovely killing Eyes ?*

*Hermits soon would quit their Cells,
Did they know what Pleasure dwells,
What Delight in Beauty's Charms,
And find Heav'n in Clara's Arms.*

Dun. Peace, Huffy, such Words may alienate her Mind, and cause her to entertain Thoughts of this World.

Pert. Truly, Sir, there is not much Satisfaction in Thoughts alone—Well, well, *Myn Heer*, I am mistaken if my Mistress *Clara* does not this Night entertain the Man she loves. [*Aside.*]

Dun. Let us hasten, Niece.

Cl. Sir, I am ready.

Enter

Enter Lady Woodmore.

L. Wood. In what unlucky Hour was I born, that nothing prospers which I take in Hand?—I met the Count with a Widow's Flame, and us'd the Art of knowing Woman; but he, regardless of my ardent Wish, could not, or, what I greatly fear, would not—Gods! what a Change can half an Hour produce!—*Mars* ne'er embrac'd his *Venus* with more Vigour than the false Count held me in his Arms, when meagre Envy sent my old Uncle to interrupt us; but when Time and Place conspir'd to make me happy, he play'd the feeble Part of *Vulcan*—a mere Superannuated Husband.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, this Letter was left with the Porter for your Ladyship.

[*Lady Woodmore reads the Letter.*]

L. Wood. Ha!—Is Skillful in the House?

Serv. No, Madam.

L. Wood. Run, and tell her I must speak with her this Instant.

[*Ex. severally.*]

[*Scene a Room, with the Picture of St. Anthony; Antonio sitting in a Chair, and Clara kneeling by him; being a Representation of a dumb Confession. He rises and crosses Clara. Robin enters, and stands behind the Chair.*]

Anton. Take my Benediction, Daughter, and depart in Peace; nothing remains but to make a Resignation of your self to St. Bridget in the Presence of your Relations.

Cl. To St. Bridget—No, no, good Father, my Heart is otherways inclin'd.

[*Aside.*]

A I R

AIR XVIII. O Jenny, Jenny, where hast, &c.

O Father, you now have miss'd your Aim,

Woman, 'tis said, for Man was made ;

Priests may deny it,

Yet I will try it,

Who, but a Fool, will die a Maid ? [Exit.

Rob. Antonio !

Anton. Ha ! I should imagine that the Voice proceeded from the Portrait of good St. Anthony, if I did not know that Pictures are nothing else than what the Limner pleases to make them ; and yet Priest-craft obliges us to infuse contrary Notions into the Minds of the Populace, and they, poor Souls ! easily believe whatever we impose upon them..

Rob. Antonio !

Anton. Again—this is portentous !

Rob. Antonio, draw near—nearer—and on thy Life, I charge thee to keep thy Eyes fixed upon the Ground. So—Thou hast a hot polluted Heart, and I now warn thee of approaching Vengeance, which nothing but Repentance can avert ; and lest you should forget my Admonition, let this be thy Remembrancer.

[Robin strikes him with his white Staff ; Antonio runs forward, and falling down, cries out Mea Culpa, Mea maxima Culpa. [Ex. Robin.

Enter Van Dunder, Clara, Count Wriggle, Pert and Robin.

Dun. Antonio on the Ground !—raise him.

Anton. Confiteor, Confiteor.

Dun. Bring my Bottle of Geneva—So, so, he recovers—How is it, good Father ? Anton.

Anton. crosses himself. Scarce had I bleſſ'd, and ſent this Virgin from me (*points to Clara*) when in a hollow Voice, the Saint, to whoſe Care I recommended you, call'd me by my Name; I answer'd, and, by his Directions, nearer came; he then did give me pious Admonition, but daring to lift up my Eyes, contrary to his Command, his radiant Beams moſt juſtly ſtruck me to the Ground.

Rob. I find the Priest is poſſeſſ'd with the Devil, and not the Spirit—'Oonds! he tells as many Lies in a Minute, as a Nobleman's Porter. [*Aside.*

Dun. Father, have you any further Commands for Clara? •

Anton. She knows my laſt Inſtructions, which done, I will conduct her to the ſacred Manſion.

C. Wrig. Why falls not ſome friendly Thunder-bolt upon my Head, that I may not ſurvive what Clara is about to utter?

Cl. Here in the Preſence of Heaven and Earth, without Constraint, I do reſign my Perſon and my Fortune, to the Man who merits both.

[*She throws herſelf into the Count's Arms.*]

C. Wrig. O! let me hold thee ever to my Heart, thou wonderful Excellence!

Anton. Impious! thus to delude the Holy Virgin, to cheat the good St. Bridget thus will draw down Vengeance due to Crimes moſt black — It muſt not, ſhall not be endur'd — [*He offers to take her from the Count.*]

C. Wrig. Touch her not, I charge thee; for, by the Honour of my Sword I ſwear, if thy polluted Hands come near her, thy Priesthood ſhall not ſave thy Life.

Cl. Dear Count forbear; he knows I have put my ſelf out of his Power.

A I R XIX. We cheated the Parson, &c.

*Like Courtiers discarded the silly Priest looks,
He's down in the Mouth, and is off from the Hooks,
Off from the Hooks,
Off from the Hooks,
He's down in, &c.*

*Demure did this sanctify'd Leacher appear,
Yet thought to have made me a Polly Cadriere,
Polly Cadriere,
Polly Cadriere,
Yet thought to have, &c.*

Anton. Myn Heer, I demand your Warrant to apprehend them.

Dun. I dare not grant it.

Anton. I will excommunicate them, thunder Anathema's against them; Dungeons, Whips and Racks shall be their Portion—Wholesome Severities are necessary.

C. Wrig. There spoke the Genius of the Sons of Rome—Hark y' Father—did you learn the Doctrine of wholesome Severities from one of our English Priests, or was he instructed by you?—Look you, Sir, we value not your empty Threats, your Anathema's, or Inquisition; there's an Asylum in the British Envoy's House, a Place of greater Safety than the Horns of your Altar.

*Anton. Blasphemy! Blasphemy! Myn Heer—
[They talk aside.]*

Rob. Well, Pert, shall we follow the Example of our Superiors, and not be terrified at the Friar's Menaces?

Pert.

Pert. His bug-bear Words shall ne'er affright me—But, *Robin*, I am thinking that if we should commit this foolish thing, call'd Matrimony, Poverty I fear would make us live like Man and Wife, ill-natur'd to one another.

Rob. Say you so? [*He tosses a Purse, and she catches it.*] This may be a means to stop the coming Evil. [*She gives him the Purse again.*]

Anton. Marry a Heretick!—*Englishmen* are the worst Hereticks.

C. Wrig. Let me tell you, Father, that *English* Hereticks, as you call them, have maintain'd an Argument for ten long Years against all Opposers; and the best Men, that *France* or *Spain* could boast, were soon laid flat, or turn'd their Backs.

A I R XX. A Soldier and a Sailor, &c.

*When Marlbro' did command us,
The French could not withstand us,
Ingloriously they ran, Sir,
When Britons led the Van, Sir,
They knew how we could fight.*

*We valued not the Plunder,
But with our British Thunder
We drove 'em down like Hail, Sir,
Their Feet did not avail, Sir,
To save their Heads by Flight.*

Dun. This is true, as I am a Magistrate.

Rob. I must interpose. [*Aside.*] — Father, a Word with you—Here are Fifty Pistoles in this Purse; these and as many more are at your Service, if you will salve this Matter—Say, have I purchas'd your good Grace?

Anton. Tempt me not—Think you that I am a Burgher of some Country-Borough, who gives his Vote for Gold, and sells his Country and his Liberty?

Rob. Then, Sir, the Saint, whose Picture is behind you, commands to let you know, 'tis time that you put in Practice what he told you, lest you receive a second Token—thus (*makes a Motion with his Hand*) Faith, Sir, to deal ingenuously with you, I was the Mock-Saint, but did not design to strike you to the Ground.

Anton. How!

Rob. Most true—I did impose upon you, and hope you will forgive me——“Sins of the Flesh” are venial, or Heaven knows what will become “of Nuns, Priests and Friars”—Is it not so, Father?

Anton. Ha! [*Pauses.*] *Robin*, be silent——all things shall go well—Give me the Purse.

Rob. Excuse me, Father, you are no Burgher of a Country-Borough, and consequently want no Bribe—Now, Father, approve the Match, or I'll discover all——[*He goes to his Master.*] The Priest has refused the Gold, but will comply without it; and I hope, Sir, you have more Honour, than to accept what he despises.

C. Wrig. Insinuating Rogue!—I give what Gold is in the Purse to *Pert*, as a part of her Portion.

Cl. I will double the Sum.

Pert. Accept our Thanks to both, for we have no other way to shew our Gratitude.

Anton. My Zeal, *Myn Heer*, o'erwhelmed me; maturely I've consider'd ev'ry Circumstance, and since your Neice has made no formal Resignation of her self to good St. *Bridget*, nor has renounced our pure Religion, she merits Absolution.

Enter

Enter Lady Woodmore.

L. Wood. I come in time to bid my Cousin adieu
—Clara, you will soon be happy.

Cl. I doubt it not.

L. Wood. Count, I have something to impart
to you—Read this Letter.

C. Wrig. Ha! Sir Timothy dead!

L. Wood. Yes—Now, Sir, I am Mistress of a
large Estate; can Ten Thousand Pounds *per An-*
num win your Love?—if so, command my Mo-
ney and my Person.

C. Wrig. You are a generous Lady—But Clara
is all the World to me—Our Hearts and Souls so
firm are knit that nothing but Death can separate
us, and we only wait for the ceremonial Rite.

L. Wood. Clara!—G my foreboding Heart!—
is this the Result of her late Promise? [*Aside*]—
Have you forgot what was so lately done?

C. Wrig. I well remember what I might have
done, and call to mind the Work unfinish'd.

L. Wood. Like an old Criminal much Art you
use, endeavouring to elude the Charge; but I
have a living Witness to attest what you have pro-
mised.

C. Wrig. Produce your Evidence.

Enter Skillful, running.

Skil. I protest, Madam, I expected to have found
your Ladyship in Labour.

L. Wood. My Mind indeed is on the Rack; but
—[*they whisper.*] Do you know this Gentleman?

Skil. Yes, Madam; and I assure you he is a Gen-
tleman in every Inch.

L. Wood. He denies—[*She whispers again.*]

C. Wrig.

C. Wrig. Hark you, *Mrs. Skillful*, is Perjury, as well as Bawding, a Branch of your Profession.

Skil. I little expected a Question so uncivil from you, who know me, Sir.

C. Wrig. Let me once more peruse that Letter, Madam—Ha, ha, ha, 'tis forged—*Robin*, are you acquainted with this Writing?

Rob. Yes, Sir, I will unravel the Plot. [Exit.]

C. Wrig. Now, Madam, to secure your Reputation, be silent; I will not expose your Ladyship, but must tell you, you embrac'd the Man, you little did expect.

Enter Sir Timothy and Robin.

Dun. Sir *Timothy*! Welcome, doubly welcome.

L. Wood. Had I not Reason, *Skillful*, to complain, when big with Hopes of a young, airy Lover, I met a useless, dull, old Husband——That Villain, *Robin*, has deceiv'd me—

A I R XXI. I am a poor Shepherd undone.

No Woman sure under the Sun

Had ever such Luck as I;

By Parents for ever undone,

My Folly I now descry.

To Age I was wedded, not join'd,

For they had contriv'd it so;

To Youth my Heart was inclin'd,

Obedience has caus'd my Woe.

And, alas, poor Woman!

O'erwhelm'd in deep Despair,

I wish — but 'tis in vain,

I wish, that I had an Heir.

Sir

Sir *Timothy*, I hear you can be liberal of your Favours, tho' I must not participate.

Sir *Tim*. I understand you not!

L. *Wood*. Then to inform you, call to mind the Drawing-Room—Your Wickedness with *Pert* is come to Light.

Pert. With me, Madam, I defy your Ladyship to prove me guilty of an immodest Action!—I advise you to be more circumspect, my Lady, and not charge others with Crimes of which you are guilty.

Sir *Tim*. I am betray'd! [*Aside.*]

C. *Wrig*. *Myn Heer*, let us use our Endeavours to reconcile Sir *Timothy* and his Lady.

Skil. I fear the Breach is not so easy to be stop'd.

Cla. Let us all use our Interest.

Dun. Neice, tell me your Grief.

C. *Wrig*. Permit me to relate it—Sir *Timothy* came from *Ghent* this Morning, to be a Tenant at Will to *Pert*; but *Robin*, who was entrusted with the Secret, ordered it so, that the Knight gain'd Possession of his own Premises—this was a Disappointment to him, and no great Satisfaction to his Lady.

Dun. A Slip, a Slip—Come, Neice, receive him kindly—So—One thing more remains—Here, Count, take this Girl, and with her take Twenty Thousand Pounds.

C. *Wrig*. Thus on my Knees the Blessing I receive.

A I R XXII. Trip to the Jubilee.

*Sir Tim. Let's banish all Care and Sorrow,
Our Moments in Mirth employ,
The baneful Thoughts of To-morrow
Will Halcyon Hours destroy.*

*Van Dun. Then merrily spend your Time
In Love and generous Wine,
And, while you are in your Prime,
Carouse till your Noses shine :*

*C. Wrig. And he that denies to join,
Shall ne'er be a Friend of mine ;*

C H O R U S,

*For we deny
All such Phlegmatick Company.*

F I N I S.

